

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claim 8 has been amended. No new matter has been added.

This amendment changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-8 are now pending in this application.

Claim 8 has been amended. No new matter has been added.

Double patenting

Claims 1-8 were provisionally rejected as being unpatentable over various claims of application no. 10/083,505. Application no. 10/083,505 has now issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,791,637 (the '637 patent) on September 14, 2003. To the extent that the double patenting rejection applies to the '637 patent, applicant provides as follows.

Without conceding the propriety of the above double patenting rejection with respect to the '637 patent, and in order to further prosecution, a Terminal Disclaimer with respect to the '637 patent is being filed herewith under 37 C.F.R. 1.321(c). Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that the obvious-type double patenting rejection with respect to the '637 patent has been overcome.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,948,229 to Soref (hereafter “Soref”). Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,720,172 to Baker (hereafter “Baker”). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 8 is directed to a light guide for providing light to a display area. The light guide includes a planar light guiding medium being of a liquid crystal material and having a top light emitting surface and one or more side faces disposed around the top light emitting surface. The light guide also includes a plurality of light pipes, each light pipe having a collector end for collecting light and an output end, the output ends being arranged along the side faces so as to introduce the collected light into the guiding medium. Thus, in claim 8 the side faces are disposed around the top light emitting surface, and the output ends of the light pipes are arranged along the side faces. Neither Soref nor Baker disclose or suggest this feature of claim 8.

Soref discloses an input optical fiber 12 and output optical fibers 16 arranged near beam splitters 30, 32 and/or 34, which in turn are adjacent a ferroelectric liquid crystal layer (FLC) 20 (Fig. 1, col. 4, lines 43-61). The output ends of the optical fibers 12 or 16 of Soref, however, are not arranged along side faces of the FLC 20, where the side faces are disposed around any top light emitting surface of the FLC 20. Thus, Soref fails to anticipate claim 8.

Baker discloses a liquid crystal material 18 and a plurality of optical fibers 24, 26, 28 and 30 arranged near the material 18. The output ends of the optical fibers 24, 26, 28 and 30 of Baker, however, are not arranged along side faces of the liquid crystal material 18, where the side faces are disposed around any top light emitting surface of the liquid crystal material 18. Thus, Soref fails to anticipate claim 8.

Moreover, claim 8 is directed to a light guide for providing light to a display area. The Baker and Soref devices are directed to optical switches, but are silent as to using their devices for display applications.

For at least the above reasons, applicant submits that claim 8 is patentable over Baker and Soref, and respectfully request that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date September 23, 2004

By Thomas G. Bilodeau

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Telephone: (202) 672-5485
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

William T. Ellis
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 26,874

Thomas G. Bilodeau
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 43,438